

Members of our staff who have followed closely this aspect of the program view with concern, however, the provision in section 223(C) which raises the matching funds requirement from 10 percent to 20 percent.

Few, if any, groups of poor people would be able to raise such a sum. This could, therefore, have the effect of making it possible for only long-established institutions with broad-based support to submit proposals.

Such groups should be involved in the war against poverty. They bring to it both a concern for the poor and an expertise in dealing with their problems.

Conceivably, they should be asked to meet a larger matching fund requirement. But couldn't a needs test be applied in such a manner as to make it possible for groups of poor people to continue to submit proposals under a matching-fund requirement of 10 percent.

Mr. GIBBONS. May we interrupt at this point because I think this is a misconception. Under the present law under which we are operating, the Office of Economic Opportunity has authority under exceptional circumstances to fund up to 100 percent of the cost of it.

I think your statement is legitimate. They have not established any criteria but they can make the decision. It just has not been done. I think your complaint is one that should be addressed to the agency rather than to the Congress.

Dr. FLEMMING. Is that same authority continued in the draft which is now before the committee?

Mr. GIBBONS. I could not be positive on this but I feel sure it is. It is just a hesitancy on the part of the agency to make a decision as to what agency is entitled to 100 percent funding and what is agency funding.

They would rather put them all on the 80 percent basis so there is an escape valve there.

Dr. FLEMMING. Oftentimes the problems of the poor are more clearly seen by the poor themselves than by any other group.

Our third concern is that of organized effort by the poor. The policy statement by the general board includes this paragraph:

Essential to the effective involvement of the poor in community-wide and church programs is the creation of a supportive atmosphere for the self-organization of the poor.

The history of the human struggle for justice and equity reveals few instances in which the establishments of this world have voluntarily transferred power to the powerless or of their own free will granted redress of grievances to the exploited and the dispossessed.

For the contemporary poor, as for other disadvantaged groups in history, self-organization for countervailing power is an essential ingredient of any successful war effort against poverty.

Mr. GIBBONS. We saw as recently as yesterday there is some inuendo that this involvement of the poor is the cause of the problems we are suffering today in riots and so on. I realize you can't base it on evidence but I would like your opinion as one who is learned in this field of human relations.

Do you think this is a contributing factor or what are your views on that?

Dr. FLEMMING. Mr. Congressman, and Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that recent developments give rise to a question of this nature. I would